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Letter dated 17 July 2012 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit a letter dated 17 July 2012 from the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Nabil Elaraby, regarding the mandate of the United Nations Supervision Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon

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Annex to the letter dated 17 July 2012 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I write with regard to an urgent and critical matter that is pivotal to the success of our joint efforts to address the Syrian crisis: the mandate of the United Nations Supervision Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic (UNSMIS).

I am confident that you will agree with me that the term and nature of the mandate of UNSMIS are of critical importance, especially at the present juncture, when violence has reached such intolerable levels and the number of innocent victims who fall daily has become untenable. This matter is even more pressing now, in the aftermath of the latest tragedy that befell the village of Treimseh in Hama.

As you very rightly pointed out in your statement of 13 July, there is indeed an urgent need for collective and decisive action to immediately and fully stop the tragedy unfolding in Syria, and inaction becomes a licence for further massacres.

I also agree with you, in emphasizing that the Security Council must insist on the implementation of its decisions and on the need to send a strong message to all that there will be serious consequences for continued non-compliance. As you quite rightly stated, there must be united, sustained and effective pressure now.

The mandate of UNSMIS will come under consideration by the Security Council in a few days. I am confident that you appreciate the importance that the League of Arab States attaches to UNSMIS and its role in ending the violence and ensuring compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions.

No doubt, a strong, visible and active United Nations presence on the ground in Syria is essential for the successful implementation of what the international community has agreed upon.

The ministerial committee on Syria of the League of Arab States is scheduled to meet in Doha on 22 July to consider the current situation. It will examine the present stalemate and propose ways and means to ensure the cessation of violence and the implementation of the plan of the Joint Special Envoy, Kofi Annan.

I am sure that you would share my view that it is essential that the outcome of the ministerial meeting be before the Council as it addresses the mandate of UNSMIS and takes action on a matter that is at the heart of the Arab world and the Middle East.

Accordingly, I respectfully suggest that you consider advising the Council to postpone taking a decision on the mandate of UNSMIS for a few days, until after the conclusion of the meeting of the Arab ministerial committee. I have conveyed this request to you at my meeting in Addis Ababa with Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson.

In that regard, I will of course report to you and, through you, to the Council, in detail, the results of the meeting.

Furthermore, given that agreement among the Permanent Members of the Security Council has yet to be achieved regarding a Security Council resolution on the matter, perhaps such a postponement and the results of the meeting of the Arab ministerial committee may be conducive to consensus in the Council.

I sincerely hope that you and the members of the Security Council will be in a position to accommodate the preceding suggestion, which I believe is to the benefit of our collective action to bring about a peaceful, political resolution to a most dangerous situation.